Coláiste Eoin

Computer & Internet Acceptable Use Policy

1. Introduction

Various computer systems are in place in Coláiste Eoin for the use of students, teachers, staff and subject departments to support the educational programmes which take place in the school. These systems exist for the purposes of education, academic development, research and public service. Those who make use of them are obliged to use them efficiently taking moral, legal and personal rights into account.

The aim of the Acceptable Use Policy is to set out rules which ensure acceptable use of these computer systems. Unacceptable use is prohibited and such unacceptable usage will result in loss of the privileges of computer use and possible school or legal sanctions.

The Acceptable Use Policy also aims to ensure that students will benefit from the learning opportunities which Coláiste Eoin's computer resources provide in a safe and effective manner. Use of and access to computers and Internet are regarded as a school resource and privilege.

It is intended that representatives of the school and of the parent body will regularly review the Acceptable Use Policy. Prior to signing the Acceptable Use Policy, individual students and parents should read it carefully to ensure that it is understood and that the conditions of use are accepted.

This version of the Acceptable Use Policy was created on 6 June 2013 by Stiofán Ó Breacáin and Finín Máirtín.

It was approved at a meeting of Board of Management on 12 June 2013.

2. Scope

All persons who use the computer systems in Coláiste Eoin must read, understand and abide by The Acceptable Usage Policy and also by any rules, regulations or other directions issued by Coláiste Eoin.

3. Rights

The computer equipment, facilities and school accounts are operated by and are the property of Coláiste Eoin. Coláiste Eoin reserves all rights associated with its computer resources and these rights include the right to immediately terminate use of these resources.

4. Privileges

The privileges of use of and of access to the computer systems in Coláiste Eoin are provided via the IT staff. Various people may be authorised users of the systems and avail of access and privileges by following certain steps.

The Information and Communications Technology Co-ordinator, Máistir Ó Breacáin, will decide who shall have permission to use the computer systems and will issue accounts and passwords.

No user may transfer this permission or privilege to another. No user may use an account which is not his except with the express permission of the ICT Co-ordinator. The authorised uses are responsible for the proper use of the system including the protection of passwords.

5. Responsibilities

Users of computer systems and equipment are responsible in ensuring that:

- Access to computer resources in Coláiste Eoin is shared equitably between users.

- An atmosphere which permits learning to take place is created.

- No food or drink is brought into the computer room. Anyone doing so will be asked to leave and may have their privileges reduced.

- No misbehaviour of any kind takes place. If it does a user will be asked to shut down his/her computer and to undertake other written work.

- No harassment or defamatory remarks are made via computers in Coláiste Eoin. Those who transmit such remarks to or from Coláiste Eoin will be responsible for their actions. Coláiste Eoin is not responsible for transmission of such remarks through its computer systems and does not endorse them.

- Some of the computer systems in Coláiste Eoin provide access to external networks, both public and private. These networks provide services for email, information services and, conferences etc. Users should understand that they may come across material which is objectionable, offensive or unsuitable. It is important to be aware that Coláiste Eoin is not responsible for same or for external networks.

- The user agrees that he must abide by the acceptable use guidelines with regard to any network or service to which they may gain access through the systems in Coláiste Eoin.

- The user agrees to follow correct etiquette on external networks.

- The user agrees not to make any attempt to transmit or to cause the transmission of a message of misleading origin. The user agrees that where a message that is inconsistent with the creation of an environment conducive to learning or is of misleading origin is transmitted or is caused to be transmitted, it is the person who caused the transmission and not Coláiste Eoin who will be responsible as Coláiste Eoin acts solely as an information conduit.

- An atmosphere free of malicious or illegal acts is created:

  The user agrees not to make use of computer resources at any time to undertake a malicious or illegal act. Any attempt to alter the level of access to which he/she is permitted or any attempt to affect the access of another user to resources on any computer system in Coláiste Eoin will be regarded as a malicious or possibly an illegal act.

The user agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions of the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information Act (1997). He / she also agrees that it is his / her responsibility as a citizen to be aware of his / her rights and responsibilities under these acts.

Other requirements, both legal and specific to the education system, as laid later in this document must also be satisfied. Every user accepts that he will act in accordance with the terms and conditions of relevant Irish legislation.

- A safe environment:

The door of the Computer Room will be kept locked when not in use.

No user is entitled to use a media storage device (USB key etc.) which is not the property of Coláiste Eoin. Media storage devices will be provided through Coláiste Eoin if necessary.

Should any user discover a breach of security or any technical difficulty, he/she is obliged to report this matter to the ICT Co-ordinator or to the authorities in Coláiste Eoin. The system should not be used pending resolution of the problem.

Information re passwords or loopholes in computer security systems may not be used do damage any computer resources, to access additional resources, to take resources from another user or to gain unauthorized access to resources whose use is not permitted.

Users are responsible for making backup copies of their own data. The ICT Co-ordinator will organize cleaning of the network from time to time. Where practical, owners of files will be informed in advance if practicable.

Every should know how to log out of the system and should do so at the end of each session. If a teacher requests a user, he/she should ensure that systems are closed down correctly when finished using them.

6. School Strategy

Coláiste Eoin will employ a number of strategies in order to maximise learning opportunities and to reduce risks associated with the Internet. These strategies are as follows:

General

- Class Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher.
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- Information will be provided to students and teachers re Internet Safety.
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software is not permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of personal USB keys, CD-ROMs or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.
- Students will practise good netiquette (i.e. Internet etiquette), will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any action that may bring the school into disrepute.

World Wide Web

- Students will use the Internet for educational purposes only.
- Students will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials.
- Students will immediately report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials to the supervising teacher
- Students will not copy information into assignments without acknowledging the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement).
- Students will never disclose personal information.
- Students are not permitted to download material or images not relevant to their studies.
- Students will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, school-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons.

Email

- Students will use approved class email accounts under supervision by or permission from a teacher.
- Students will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person.
- Students will not reveal their own or others, personal details, such as addresses, telephone numbers or pictures.
- Students will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher.

Internet Chat

- Permission from the school will be required for access to chat rooms, discussion forums or other electronic communication forums.
- Chat room, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will be used only for educational purposes and will always be monitored.
- User names will be used to avoid disclosure of identity.
- It is forbidden to organise face-to-face meetings with someone through Internet chat or by email.

School Website

- Students will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or schoolwork only with a teacher's permission.
- A teacher will co-ordinate the publication of students' work.
- Students' work will be published on web pages in an educational context and containing a copyright notice do prevent copying of such work without written permission.
- Publication of digital photographs, aural or video clips of individual students is not permitted on the school website. Digital photographs, aural and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected.
- Students' personal information such as home addresses and contact details will not be published on the school's web pages.

- Students will retain copyright ownership of any material which is published.

7. Accounts

It is the only the ICT Co-ordinator who will issue or revoke passwords. No user shall use an account other than his / her own with specific permission from the ICT Co-ordinator. Each user is responsible for correct use of the account, protection of passwords included.

The user is responsible for any work carried out via the account and which is transmitted to or from the account. He / she is also responsible for maintenance of files and folders which are created within the account.

8. Confidentiality

Programmes and files are confidential unless they are made available, with written permission, to other users. The ICT Co-Ordinator reserves the right to access information which is stored on computers, other than those operated by senior management. File owners will be made aware in advance of accessing files and / or maintenance if this can practicably be done. When maintenance is being carried out, every effort will be made to ensure privacy of users' files. Where a breach of privacy occurs, a report of the breach will be made immediately.

9. Use of the System:

Users should understand that their computer activities will be tracked and logged as a reference system. The ICT Co-ordinator may examine these logs at any time. Where policy violations are found, they will be reported immediately.

Electronic communication resources (such as email) are intended for school activities only. Fraudulent, harassing or obscene messages and/or materials are not to be sent or stored.

Outside normal class times, any student who has been deemed competent by the ICT Co-ordinator may use computer facilities.

Members of staff may use the Computer Room with groups provided booking is made of the room using whichever booking method is in use at the time. Timetabled classes and previously booked periods take precedence over other classes.

10. Operation of the System

No person should make any deliberate attempt to degrade the operation of a computer system or resource or to deny an authorized staff member access to a system or resource.

11. Unauthorized access

No loophole in a computer security system or knowledge of particular passwords may be used to cause damage to a computer system or resource, to source additional resources, to take resources from another user or to gain access to a computer system or systems to which the user is not authorized access.

12. Copyright

Any computer software which is protected by copyright should not be copied in whole or in part, should not be added to or should not be used by means of the resources available in Coláiste Eoin except where permitted by law or by contract with the copyright owner. This means that no computer software may be copied except to make a backup copy and where this is permitted by the copyright owner. The number of copies or the distribution of copies should not be done if the number of users in Coláiste Eoin is to exceed the number of original copies which Coláiste Eoin has purchased.

13. Virus Protection

A computer virus is a piece of software which attaches itself to another piece of software or other data, without the permission of the computer owner, and whose computer programming is such that it will multiply on other computers and thereby causing damage or interference of some kind. It is vital that every user play a part in ensuring that the network is kept free of viruses.

It is the policy of Coláiste Eoin to run virus protection software which is current on all computers linked to the network. The software will immediately report the presence of most viruses. If any user is alerted by this software via a message on screen, he/she should cease using the computer immediately and also report to a teacher or to the ICT Co-ordinator forthwith.

Viruses may attach themselves with ease to portable storage media and this is one of the main ways in which they multiply. Software which prevents users from altering computer settings will, to a point, prevent them accessing these portable media also. This is not totally secure, however. It will also happen on occasion that studens and teachers will require to transfer data to or from the network on portable media e.g. to submit homework. In order to allow this and at the same time to protect the security of the system, it is Coláiste Eoin's policy that any portable media be scanned for viruses before being accessed via a computer on the network. They should be re-scanned again every time they have been used on a computer outside the network. You are requested to give reasonable notice if scanning is required.

14. Violations

A person's computer usage privileges may be suspended immediately if any of the policies are violated. A confidential report of any such violation will be given to the ICT Co-ordinator.

The Principal may nominate the ICT Co-ordinator to examine the computer systems at any time without notice to ensure compliance with internal policies, to support internal investigations and to support the management and protection of the systems of information resource in Coláiste Eoin.

Violations of these policies will be dealt with ina a similar manner to violation of other school policies and sanctions may be applied. The full range of sanctions is applicable. This includes loss of computer use privileges, suspension or exclusion from Coláiste Eoin, involvement of Gardaí Síochána and legal action. Some of these violations could be deemed to be of a criminal nature.

15. Legislation

Coláiste Eoin endorses the content of the following legislation in relation to computer and internet use and abides by it. Students, parents and teachers should familiarise themselves with it..

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1988

- Freedom of Information Act 1997

16. Support Structures

Coláiste Eoin will provide information as appropriate to students, to parents and to teachers about the principal support structures which are available and about support organisations which deal with illegal material and with harmful use of the internet.

17. Sanctions

Disciplinary actions may occur due to misuse of the computer equipment or the internet. These include written warning, withdrawal of computer use privileges and in some cases suspension or exclusion. Coláiste Eoin reserves the right to report any illegal activity to the appropriate authorities and to seek the assistance of Gardaí and legal authorities if appropriate in the case of a serious breach of this Acceptable Usage Policy.

Parents / guardians may be asked to provide the IP address of a home internet account which is used in a malicious or offensive manner in relation to communication with or from school. This IP address will be used to identify without doubt the source of this malicious or offensive matter.

18. Additional Guidelines

Additional guidelines with regard to particular computer networks and systems will be provided by Coláiste Eoin as necessary. These guidelines will pertain to other items relating to the administration or operation of the system in order that an excellent learning experience will be provided for every user.

19. Review

This Acceptable Use Policy exists so that each user will benefit from the learning opportunities which the school's computer and internet resources provide in an effective and safe manner. Use of and access to computer and internet resources is a privilege. Coláiste Eoin and representatives of parents and students will review this policy on a yearly basis.